GUIDE TO INDUSTRIAL DEAFNESS

What is industrial deafness?

- **Industrial deafness** is the **deterioration** of a person’s **hearing** over a prolonged period of time caused by the **exposure** to **noise** in the **working** environment.
- Also know as **occupational deafness** or **noise induced hearing loss**.
- Noise causes one of the most common health problems for workers.
- Noise levels and the daily exposure to noise over a period of time, both contribute to hearing damage.

Those particularly at **risk** include workers who have:

- **worked in heavy productive industry**, such as metal work, drilling and stone cutting, or
- **worked** in those industries which require the **operation of noisy machines**.

However, a person can also **suffer** from **industrial deafness** just from working in a **noisy factory** or working environment. **Excessive noise** in the workplace can even **lead to tinnitus**.

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Tinnitus refers to the condition of noises 'in the ears' and/or 'in the head' with no external source. Tinnitus noises include ringing, whistling, buzzing and humming.

Can I claim?

In 1963 the Government produced a document confirming that noise at work could cause hearing loss and tinnitus. Since this time employers have had a legal duty to assess the level of noise within the workplace and to protect their employees from exposure to excessive noises.

Employers must show that they have taken reasonable steps to reduce the noise levels where any noise is assessed as excessive. If the Employer cannot restrict the noise levels they have to offer hearing protection devices.

Many employers have failed to follow the Government guidance resulting in tens of thousands of employees suffering with industrial deafness. Therefore, if you receive diagnosis of suffering from industrial deafness or believe that you have suffered hearing loss and were exposed to noise during the course of your employment then you may be entitled to receive compensation for your injuries.

Time limits

There is a 3 year time limit on all claims for industrial deafness/tinnitus from the date you knew or ought to know you were suffering with the condition. It is important that you contact a solicitor as soon as possible to seek legal advice.

Simpson Millar LLP's specialist team of dedicated and highly skilled solicitors deal with claims of this nature frequently and will advise you fully and help you to make a compensation claim.

This guide contains information on current legal issues applicable at the time of printing. Note there may have been changes subsequently which have not been incorporated into the material. This guide is intended for information purposes only and its content should not be applied to any particular set of facts or relied upon without legal or other professional advice. For further information on how we can help you please contact:

0808 129 3320